

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-3, 5, 21-23, and 25 without prejudice.

Please amend the claims as follows:

- 1 4. (3 Times Amended) A method for accessing files in a data storage system of a computer
 2 system having means for reading and writing data from the data storage system, displaying
 3 information, and accepting user input, wherein each file located on the data storage system
 4 has a file name, the method comprising the steps of:
 - 5 (a) initially defining in the computer system at least one list having a plurality of
 6 category descriptions, each category description comprising a descriptive name,
 7 the category descriptions having no predefined hierarchical relationship with such
 8 list or each other;
 - 9 (b) thereafter accepting user input associating with a file at least one category
 10 description from at least one defined list;
 - 11 (c) storing in the data storage system a file record containing at least the file name, file
 12 location information, and the associated category descriptions for the file;
 - 13 (d) displaying from each defined list, as selectable items, only those category
 14 descriptions associated with at least one file;
 - 15 (e) accepting user positional input defining a search filter of at least one category
 16 description selected from at least one displayed defined list;
 - 17 (f) automatically disabling, in the computer system, selectability of all other category
 18 descriptions in each displayed list that do not have associated files which are also
 19 associated with the category descriptions of the defined search filter;
 - 20 (g) searching in the computer system the category descriptions of each stored file
 21 record for a logical match to the category descriptions of the defined search filter;
 - 22 (h) [(g)] displaying the file names of all file records having category descriptions that
 23 logically match each category description of the defined search filter.

1 6. (Twice Amended) The method for accessing files of [claims 3 or] claim 4, further including
2 the steps of:

- 3 (a) accepting user input selecting at least one file from the displayed file names;
4 (b) accessing each selected file on the data storage system using the file location
5 information from the file record associated with each corresponding selected file.

1 7. (3 Times Amended) A method for accessing files in a data storage system of a computer
2 system having means for reading and writing data from the data storage system, displaying
3 information, and accepting user input, the method comprising the steps of:

- 4 (a) initially creating in the computer system a category description table containing a
5 plurality of category descriptions, each category description comprising a
6 descriptive name, the category descriptions having no predefined hierarchical
7 relationship with such list or each other;
8 (b) thereafter creating in the computer system a file information directory comprising
9 at least one entry corresponding to a file on the data storage system, each entry
10 comprising at least a unique file identifier for the corresponding file, and a set of
11 category descriptions selected from the category description table; and
12 (c) thereafter creating in the computer system a search filter comprising a set of
13 category descriptions, wherein for each category description in the search filter
14 there is guaranteed to be at least one entry in the file information directory having
15 a set of category descriptions matching the set of category descriptions of the
16 search filter.

1 24. (Twice Amended) A system for accessing files in a data storage system of a computer
2 system having means for reading and writing data from the data storage system, displaying
3 information, and accepting user input, wherein each file located on the data storage system
4 has a file name, the system comprising:

- 5 (a) means for initially defining in the computer system at least one list having a
6 plurality of category descriptions, each category description comprising a
7 descriptive name, the category descriptions having no predefined hierarchical
8 relationship with such list or each other;
- 9 (b) means for thereafter accepting user input associating with a file at least one
10 category description from at least one defined list;
- 11 (c) means for storing in the data storage system a file record containing at least the file
12 name, file location information, and the associated category descriptions for the
13 file;
- 14 (d) means for displaying from each defined list, as selectable items, only those
15 category descriptions associated with at least one file;
- 16 (e) means for accepting user positional input defining a search filter of at least one
17 category description selected from at least one displayed defined list;
- 18 (f) means for automatically disabling, in the computer system, selectability of all other
19 category descriptions in each displayed list that do not have associated files which
20 are also associated with the category descriptions of the defined search filter;
- 21 (g) means for searching in the computer system the category descriptions of each
22 stored file record for a logical match to the category descriptions of the defined
23 search filter;
- 24 (h) [(g)] means for displaying the file names of all file records having category descriptions
25 that logically match each category description of the defined search filter.

1 26. (Twice Amended) The system for accessing files of [claims 23 or] claim 24, further includ-
2 ing:

- 3 (a) means for accepting user input selecting at least one file from the displayed file
4 names;
5 (b) means for accessing each selected file on the data storage system using the file
6 location information from the file record associated with each corresponding
7 selected file.

1 27. (Twice Amended) A system for accessing files in a data storage system comprising:

- 2 (a) a plurality of files in a data storage system;
3 (b) a plurality of user-defined category descriptions, each category description
4 comprising a descriptive name, the category descriptions having no predefined
5 hierarchical relationship with such list or each other;
6 (c) file association means for associating at least one file with at least one category
7 description selected from the plurality of previously defined [user-defined]
8 category descriptions;
9 (d) category description addition means for adding one or more additional category
10 descriptions to the plurality of user-defined category descriptions; and
11 (e) category linking means for linking at least one linking category description to at
12 least one linked category description, such that if a specific file is associated with
13 a linking category description, the user must also associate that specific file with
14 at least one of the linked category descriptions corresponding to the linking
15 category description.